

23. (Amended) A computer readable medium having a computer program, comprising:

a first logic for identifying at least one patient identifier related to a patient that is the subject of a medical diagnostic exam;

a second logic for obtaining an input reflective of an operator's desire whether to associate the at least one patient identifier with at least one image acquired during the medical diagnostic exam; and

a third logic for generating the at least one image with the at least one patient identifier obscured in response to the second logic by applying at least one mask to the at least one patient identifier in a plurality of frames comprising an image loop.

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed on October 3, 2002. Claims 1-24 are pending in the application. By the present amendment, Claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 24 and Claims 2-5, 8, 9, 11-14, 17, 18, 21, 22 and 23 have been amended. No new matter or issues are believed to be introduced by the amendments.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claims 8, 9, 17, 18, 21 and 22 if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. These claims have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitation of the base claim, as well as limitations of intervening claims which Applicants believe are necessary to place these claims in condition for allowance. Accordingly, allowance of Claims 8, 9, 17, 18, 21 and 22 is respectfully requested.

Claims 10, 19, 20, 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,091,841 issued to Rogers et al. on July 18, 2000 ("Rogers et al."). Claims 10, 19, 20 and 24 have been cancelled.

Applicants have amended Claim 23 in a manner which is believed to obviate the rejection. Specifically, Claim 23 has been amended to recite "a third logic for generating the at least one image with the at least one patient identifier obscured in response to the second logic *by applying at least one mask to the at least one patient identifier in a plurality of frames comprising an image loop.*" (Emphasis added)

The limitations added to Claim 23 are not disclosed or suggested by Rogers et al. Therefore, Claim 23 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) with respect to Claim 23 and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-7 and 11-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,210,327 to Brackett et al. ("Brackett et al.") in view of Rogers et al. Claims 1, 6, 7, 15 and 16 have been cancelled.


Claims 2-5 and 11-14 depend from Claims 8 and 17, respectively, and therefore include the limitations of Claims 8 and 17. Therefore, for at least the same reasons given for Claims 8 and 17 above, Claims 2-5 and 11-14 are believed to be allowable over the prior art references, taken alone or in combination. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) with respect to Claims 2-5 and 11-14 and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all claims presently pending in the application, namely, Claims 2-5, 8, 9, 11-14, 21, 22 and 23, are believed to be in condition for allowance and patentably distinguishable over the art of record.

Attached hereto and identified as VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE is a copy of the amended claims detailing the amendments made thereto.

If the Examiner should have any questions concerning this communication or feels that an interview would be helpful, the Examiner is requested to call John Vodopia, Esq., Intellectual Property Counsel, Philips Electronics North America, at 914-333-9627.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

2. (Amended) The method of claim [1] 8, wherein acquiring comprises performing a diagnostic examination in association with an image acquisition device.

3. (Amended) The method of claim [1] 8, wherein acquiring comprises retrieving a data file from a data storage device.

4. (Amended) The method of claim [1] 8, wherein identifying comprises selecting at least one patient identifier to be removed from the at least one diagnostic image.

5. (Amended) The method of claim [1] 8, wherein modifying comprises obscuring an area of the at least one diagnostic image.

8. (Amended) [The method of claim 6, further comprising:] A method for selectively removing data from one or more images in a computer based system, comprising:

acquiring at least one diagnostic image;

identifying patient information that is to be excluded from the at least one diagnostic image;

modifying the at least one diagnostic image responsive to the step of identifying, wherein identified patient information is excluded from the at least one diagnostic image by applying at least one [a] mask to [the] at least one patient identifier of the identified



patient information in one of the diagnostic image and a plurality of frames comprising an image loop; and

exporting the at least one modified diagnostic image over a data network.

9. (Amended) [The method of claim 6, wherein] A method for selectively removing data from one or more images in a computer based system, comprising:

acquiring at least one diagnostic image;

identifying patient information that is to be excluded from the at least one diagnostic image;

modifying the at least one diagnostic image responsive to the step of identifying, wherein identified patient information is excluded from the at least one diagnostic image by superimposing a plurality of masks [are superimposed] over a respective instance of [the] at least one patient identifier of the identified patient information in a multiple image display format; and

exporting the at least one modified diagnostic image over a data network.

11. (Amended) The system of claim [10] 17, further comprising:
means for communicating the at least one diagnostic image to at least one device on a network

12. (Amended) The system of claim [10] 17, wherein the retrieving means comprises a computer based diagnostic image acquisition system.

13. (Amended) The system of claim [10] 17, wherein the retrieving means comprises a computing device in association with a network.

14. (Amended) The system of claim [10] 17, wherein the identifying means comprises an image enhancer.

17. (Amended) [The system of claim 15, wherein] A computer based diagnostic image enhancement system, comprising:

means for retrieving a digital representation of at least one diagnostic image;

means for identifying at least one patient identifier reflective of the subject of an underlying diagnostic study that is not intended for association with the at least one diagnostic image; and

means for selectively obscuring the at least one patient identifier responsive to the identifying means by applying at least one mask [is applied] to the at least one patient identifier in one of the diagnostic image and a plurality of frames comprising an image loop.

18. (Amended) [The system of claim 15, wherein] A computer based diagnostic image enhancement system, comprising:

means for retrieving a digital representation of at least one diagnostic image;

means for identifying at least one patient identifier reflective of the subject of an underlying diagnostic study that is not intended for association with the at least one diagnostic image; and

means for selectively obscuring the at least one patient identifier responsive to the identifying means by superimposing a plurality of masks [are superimposed] over a respective instance of the at least one patient identifier in a multiple image display format.

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21. (Amended) [The image enhancer of claim 19, wherein the image editor applies] An interactive diagnostic image enhancer, comprising:

an image manager configured to receive a digital representation of a diagnostic image and at least one patient identifier;

a user interface coupled to the image manager, operable to receive a plurality of commands from an operator via at least one input device, configured to identify at least one patient identification parameter that is not desired for association with the diagnostic image, wherein the user interface generates at least one command responsive to the identified patient parameter; and

an image editor coupled to the image manager and the user interface, configured to receive the at least one command, wherein the image editor obscures the at least one patient parameter by applying at least one mask to the at least one patient identifier in one of the diagnostic image and a plurality of frames comprising an image loop.

22. (Amended) [The image enhancer of claim 19, wherein the image editor superimposes] An interactive diagnostic image enhancer, comprising:

an image manager configured to receive a digital representation of a diagnostic image and at least one patient identifier;

a user interface coupled to the image manager, operable to receive a plurality of commands from an operator via at least one input device, configured to identify at least one patient identification parameter that is not desired for association with the diagnostic image, wherein the user interface generates at least one command responsive to the identified patient parameter; and

an image editor coupled to the image manager and the user interface, configured to receive the at least one command, wherein the image editor obscures the at least one patient parameter by superimposing a plurality of masks over a respective instance of the at least one patient identifier in a multiple image display format.

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